

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /025 W
-----011132Z 020396 /23 15

R 010815Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1826
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T AMMAN 3074

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, JO, XF
SUBJECT: SENATOR STONE--MEETING WITH LTGEN BIN SHAKER

1. SUMMARY: SENATOR STONE AND PARTY MET MAY 29
WITH JORDANIAN ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF LT
GENERAL SHARIF ZAID BIN SHAKER. CONVERSATION
INCLUDED DISCUSSION OF JORDANIAN-SYRIAN
MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, SECURITY QUESTIONS RE-
GARDING A PALESTINIAN STATE, PRESENCE OF
ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE WEST BANK,
POSITION OF THE PLO AND SELF-DETERMINATION,
JORDANIAN ROLE IN FUTURE NEGOTIATION, U.S.
ROLE IN PEACE PROCESS, PHASED ASPECTS OF PEACE,
AND JORDANIAN MILITARY ROLE IN THE GULF AND PENINSULA
STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. CONVERSATION, ATTENDED BY SENATOR, AND
AIDES BRYEN AND SCHOCHET, BEGAN WITH A QUESTION
ON JORDAN-SYRIAN RELATIONSHIPS. BIN SHAKER
EMPHASIZED JORDANIAN DESIRE TO REMAIN INDE-
PENDENT. HE NOTED THAT ASAD MIGHT NOT BE
AROUND FOREVER AND SYRIAN POLICIES COULD
CHANGE. IN THE MEANTIME, JORDAN HAD DEVELOPED
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SOME JOINT DEFENSE PLANS WITH SYRIA IN THE
EVENT OF AN ATTACK, JORDAN LOOKED TO IMPROVING
SYRIAN TRAINING ON JORDANIAN MODEL, IT HAD CON-
DUCTED SOME JOINT COMMAND POST EXERCISES, AND WOULD
PROBABLY SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE CONDUCT JOINT
MANEUVERS WITH SOME SYRIAN MILITARY ELEMENTS.

3. BIN SHAKER INDICATED THAT THE SYRIAN MILITARY OFFICERS WITH WHOM HE MET SUPPORTED PRESIDENT ASAD'S VIEWS, BUT THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT TO MEET ANY WHO DID NOT. BIN SHAKER WAS LAVISH IN HIS PRAISE OF SYRIAN CHIEF OF STAFF SHIHABI WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS BRIGHT, AMERICAN TRAINED, AND DEVOTED TO ASAD.

4. JORDANIAN GENERAL ALSO SAID HE BELIEVED JORDAN COULD CONTROL THE WEST BANK IN THE FUTURE AND DID NOT SEEM CONCERNED THAT SUCH AN ENTITY WOULD BE A PROBLEM AS LONG AS THE U.S. BACKED A STRONG AND STABLE JORDAN. EVEN AN INDEPENDENT WEST BANK WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE DEMILITARIZED AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO PALESTINIAN ARMY ALLOWED TO BE FOREMED ON THE WEST BANK. IF THERE WERE IT COULD BECOME A DANGER. HOWEVER, MOST PALESTINIANS WANTED A LINK WITH JORDAN.

5. ASKED ABOUT ISRAELI DEFENSE LINES BEYOND ITS BORDER, EVEN AS PART OF A TRANSITION TOWARD PEACE, BIN SHAKER WAS SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE ISRAELIS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO KEEP POSITIONS ON ARAB TERRITORY AND SAID THE ARABS WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE ALLON PLAN. SIMILARLY HE WAS AGAINST ALLOWING ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS TO CONTINUE IN THE WEST BANK AND SAID THEY SHOULD ALL BE WITHDRAWN IN A SETTLEMENT.

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6. ASKED ABOUT THE LIKUD ELECTION VICTORY, SHAKER SAID HE WAS STILL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT A SETTLEMENT ON THE BASIS OF U.S. DETERMINATION TO HELP. HE STILL BELIEVED KING HAD A KEY ROLE AND THAT THE ONLY LEADERSHIP THE ISRAELIS WOULD TRUST TO KEEP THE WEST BANK CLEAN WOULD BE JORDAN.

7. TURNING TO THE PLO, NOT SURPRISINGLY, SHAKER SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THE PLO WAS IMPOSED ON THE PALESTINIANS BY THE ARAB LEADERSHIP AT RABAT. IN ANY ELECTION THE PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT VOTE FOR ARAFAT IF THEY HAD ANOTHER VIABLE CHOICE. WITHOUT WEAPONS ON THE WEST BANK, THE PLO WOULD LOSE TO THE REAL WEST BANK LEADERSHIP WHICH HAD STAYED BEHIND.

8. SHAKER DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL WHAT HE

CALLED WAS THE U.S.'S GREATEST MISTAKE IN NOT
ACCEPTING KING HUSSEIN'S PROPOSAL FOR A TEN
KILOMETER DISENGAGEMENT ZONE IN THE WEST BANK
IN 1974 AND GETTING ISRAEL TO ACCEPT IT. THE
SENATOR AND HIS STAFF POINTED OUT ISRAEL'S
WEAK GOVERNMENT AT THE TIME. SHAKER SAID HE
CONTINUED TO BELIEVE NEVERTHELESS THAT THE
MISTAKE HAD BEEN SERIOUS AND WOULD BE HARD TO
REPAIR.

9. ON NORMALIZATION MEASURES, SHAKER SAID THESE
WOULD BE INESCAPABLE RESULTS OF A PEACE ARRANGEMENT
ALTHOUGH THEY MIGHT NOT COME AS RAPIDLY AS ISRAELIS WANTED.

10. TURNING TO IRAQ, SHAKER NOTED THAT IT
WAS GAINING MILITARY STRENGTH, BUT ITS GREATEST
THREAT WAS SUBVERSIVE AND UNDERGROUND

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ACTIVITY. IF IRAQ GOT OBSTREPEROUS,
SHAKER ASSUMED THAT SYRIA AND IRAN, WITH WHOM
JORDAN HAD GOOD RELATIONS, COULD HELP. IRAQ
WAS ALSO HOWEVER A THREAT TO THE GULF STATES.

11. DURING THE MEETING SHAKER PROVIDED THE
SENATOR'S PARTY WITH TABLES SHOWING JORDANIAN
TRAINING ASSISTANCE TO VARIOUS GULF AND PENIN-
SULA STATES AND DETAILING THE SIZE OF JORDANIAN
MILITARY ASSISTANCE MISSIONS IN THAT AREA.

12. ABOVE HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED BY SENATOR STONE
AND PARTY AND IS SUBJECT TO THEIR COMMENT AND
REVISION. REQUEST TUNIS AND TEL AVIV PASS CODEL STONE.
PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS, MEETING REPORTS, PEACE PLANS, MILITARY AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977AMMAN03074
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770194-1010
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197706105/aaaadnho.tel
Line Count: 154
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ea099e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2007723
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SENATOR STONE--MEETING WITH LTGEN BIN SHAKER
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, OREP, XF, JO, SY, (STONE, RICHARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ea099e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009